29:Cochrane T-2(1821-22)1824 Kamchadal

273 Another great cause of this ravage in population
435 has arisen from the introduction of spirits: a Kamt-
563 chatdale will sell his last sable or fox for a glass
733 of it, though he is not physically strong enough to drink any thing of the kind. When it is considered that sixteen thousand bottles of this trash are consumed in the short period of three or four months by six or seven hundred people, we may well feel pity and surprise—pity for the poor women and children, and surprise at the means of getting either the money or sables. Such a quantity of spirit ought to sell for fifty thousand roubles, which is one hundred per cent. upon the price at Okotsk, but it is in reality sold for twice that sum. When it is recollected that officers, soldiers, sailors, merchants, and priests travel round the Peninsula for the purposes of trade, it will be less wonderful when I assert that each bottle of spirits sold to the Kamtchatdales, produces the value of ten and twelve shillings. Now allowing half the quantity imported (eight thousand bottles) to be consumed by the aborigines, this would produce from eighty to one hundred thousand roubles, while the cost is, in Okotsk, only twenty-five thousand. I have seen a bottle of spirits sold for a sable, and afterwards, when the party was drunk, a bottle of adulterated liquor has fetched the same price: in short, I have seen three and even four sables given for two bottles of spirits.

Allowing seven hundred and fifty families of the

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273 Koriaks and Kamtchatdales, which is five to each
435 family, and that half the quantity of imported spi-
733 rit is consumed by them, it will appear that each family consumes at least twelve bottles in four months. By this plan the poor purchaser is drunk for days together, and for the rest of the year can get nothing to cheer him under his depression. The cost of that spirit to the Kamtchatdales is one hundred and fifty or two hundred roubles, a prodigious sum for a poor family to expend upon an article so pernicious in its moral and physical effects. Such a sum of money in Kamtchatka would produce near six or eight hundred pounds weight of flour; enough to support a small family during a whole year: or, such a sum would enable them to purchase proper clothing, culinary utensils, nets, twine, tobacco, axes, and knives. The evil of these grog-shops is carried to so ruinous an extent, that the children of the natives are left for three and four days without any food, save yukola, dried fish, doled out to them one or twice within that time. I have known instances of mothers and children being left without any means of support, in consequence of the retailing of such trash being allowed. The yukola and the bark of trees is, in such cases, almost the only nourishment the women and children can procure for several days. If they happen to be possessed of a cow, they are considered very fortunate. It needs little philosophy to prove that it is only by taking care of the rising